

CELEBRATING 20 YEARS 1994-2014

# NORTH KENT

# LOTUS GROUP

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Dear Enthusiast

Well, this month saw an excellent turnout for the club night and it was good to see Tim and have a catch up. The main conversation centered around Crystal Palace and Edenbridge which have both now come and gone for another year. We gave Crystal Palace a miss this year but we had an enjoyable afternoon at Edenbridge on the Monday and took part in the parade along with a gaggle of NKLG participants.



A thank you must go to Roger D for doing the organising and to Richard for also looking after us - being a local resident he was helping out with marshalling duties etc.

A few spots of rain turned into a steady drizzle by the end of the day although it didn't really spoil things. John Surtees headed up the procession in a loaned F1 Ferrari. We watched

from the starting point and he was not very happy sitting in a steadily overheating car whilst the organisers sorted out a few errant vehicles coming the other way.

Vaughn managed to perfectly snap a shot of a historic twelve-wheeled Ferrari!.....

The turnout was good - Mat/Trudi; John/Joan; Howard/Jenny; Roger/Helena; Vaughn/Diana; Terry; Richard; Sue and me and Jon, Michelle and Jasmin who incidentally turned up in the two yellow Loti - Yes, Jon has finished the Elan. The Esprit and Elan make a very nice matching pair!! Final report from Jon is over the page (don't forget to make a note of the generous 20% discount that Jon has

managed to negotiate for wheel refurbishment with Lepsons).

I had to chuckle last week. I was dropping the Elise off at Normans around 9 in the morning for it's annual service (I usually put the keys through his letterbox) and I bumped into a regular UPS delivery driver with a package for him. Anyone who knows Norman knows that he's not an "early morning" person. "Fifteen years I've been doing this round" he said "and I've never met him!!"

My other chuckle for May was seeing Mick M's tee shirt on club night bearing the motif "Lots Of Torque Usually Spinning!" He should go into production with them - there must be a ready market.

The Komosa Cup Treasure Hunt didn't come up to expectations this year. Howard and Jenny put in the effort but unfortunately only ONE car made the start-line - Roger and Helena! As events go it might well be a case of some you win some you lose but perhaps treasure hunts are not for everyone. I know I'm useless at them. But thanks go to Howard and Jenny for spending the time arranging it and for R & H taking part but perhaps it's time to call it a day?

I forgot to ask John U how he got on at Goodwood when I saw him at Edenbridge - he reported that he'd visited Lakeside Engineering and they confirmed that his Elan was suffering "Turbo Over-

boost" and made the appropriate adjustment. Max, at Lakeside, said that although the Wastegate Diaphragm is working properly it's perhaps a little tired. So John was going to replace it before the Track-day. We need an update on how it went.

Howard E has supplied the menu for the 20th Anniversary meal in July and I've just spotted a couple of mistakes! Firstly we've been promoted to the Lotus Drivers Club (or is that demoted!?) and secondly the fish dish doesn't have a reference number. This will be rectified for next month but in the meantime you can make your choices and let Howard know at the June meeting.

Lotus finally has a new boss, Jean-Marc Gales, and according to press reports, he has a good record at turning things around. The word is that the Esprit is all but ready to go and should lead a recovery plan as a high-margin low-volume model. At the other end of the scale, volume-wise, that's what they said about the Elise when it was launched and the opposite happened. It'd be nice to see the Esprit finally appear.

The letter is late again this month and the June meeting is only next week away! We won't be able to make it as we'll be having a good time settling in ready for another Le Mans 24 hours. So I hope it's a pleasant summer "car-park" type evening and we'll see you in July.

John

## ROLLING EVENTS DIARY

### JUNE

11	Club Night	The Plough	
29	Sunday Run and Lunch		Jon & Michelle

### JULY

09	Club Night	The Plough	
13	Annual Barbeque	The Plough	Howard
27	20th Anniversary Event	London Golf	Howard



## Lotus Drivers Club 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Package price - £39 pp

To include:

Room hire of the Henry Cooper room  
3 course dinner served with coffee and mints

### Starter

- 1 Chef's Soup of the Day with a Bread Roll
- 2 Smoked Salmon and Trout Roulade, Cucumber Spaghetti and Mixed Cross
- 3 Parma Ham with a Mango and Melon Salsa

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### Main

- 4 Pan Fried Chicken Supreme with a Fondant Potato, glazed Carrots and a creamy Mushroom Sauce
- 5 Fillet of Pork enroute with Savoy Cabbage and Bacon, mash Potato and Cider jus
- 6 Teriyaki glazed Salmon with Yakisoba Noodles
- 6 Mushroom & Truffle Risotto with a Parmesan Crisp (v)

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### Dessert

- 7 Strawberry and Raspberry Eton Mess
- 8 Lemon Posset with Shortbread
- 9 Selection of English Cheeses with Chutney & Walnut Bread

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Coffee & Mint Chocolates

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## Project "Little Yella" update.

I've always wanted to do a car show at Leeds Castle so when the opportunity to attend the Supercar Siege presented itself I had to book the Esprit in. Although I hadn't finished the re-build I decided to book Project "Little Yella" in to the show as well. Now I had a deadline to finish the Elan. The show was taking place on the 18<sup>th</sup> May, that gave me 8 weeks to strip, clean, paint and re-fit the front suspension, get the wheels re-furbished and have the new tyres fitted, I also had to sort out an issue with the head lights, fit the new High Spec brakes, re-fit all the interior trim and then get it through an MOT its first in more than 10 years, (who needs sleep anyway) Lots of midnight oil has been burnt in the last 8 weeks and I must apologise to my neighbours at some point.

The first job on the list tackled was the front suspension I had both sides removed in one evening and the first coat of paint was applied the next. By the end of the first week I had the front suspension ready for re-fitting.



An early finish at work allowed me the time to take the wheels and tyres to Lepsons in Railway Street Gillingham for re-furbishing. I'd never used them before but had seen some of their work, and it looked of a very high standard. When I dropped the wheels off, I asked if they could take some photos of them going through the re-furb process which they were more than happy to do. I managed to agree a discount of 20% for the club if anyone is looking to have their wheels done, just mention the club and my name and they should honour it.



I decided on a paint finish called Bright Sparkle, it's a more metallic finish than standard and makes the spokes really stand out. The whole job took them 6 days and I'm very happy with the results.

The headlights were the biggest problem, I had none. After contacting the Elan Central forum and making some phone calls it was suggested the headlamp pod lift module had failed. A call to Lotus



Bits had a tested used unit in the post. Another issue was 2 rusty lamps. These were quite easy to find although I had to modify the white plastic ring to fit the ones I found. I used a Dremel to cut a slot in the plastic ring to take the lugs on the back of the lamps. The module arrived the next day and was promptly fitted, still I had no lights. Back to Elan Central and a long look at the

wiring diagram pointed me at a relay type module under the dash. I was assured that the headlight pod delay module could not cause the problems I was experiencing. An order for a new one was placed with Lipscomb anyway and as a result I now have a fully working set of headlights.



Whilst the front suspension was out I took the opportunity to replace the cam belt. Not a job I what to do again in a hurry. I fitted new belts to power steering and alternator. The turbo and exhaust heat shields were removed and re-plated and most of the visible bolts were replaced with stainless steel. That was the engine bay done.

The front suspension and High Spec brakes were re-fitted over the course of a weekend.

When it came to bleeding the brakes I had to fit the front seat, when I sat behind the wheel I realised it was the first time I had properly sat in the car since I'd bought it back in October. I had Jazmine pump the brakes whilst I cracked the bleed nipples, after 2 hours Jaz had a stiff leg but I had brakes. The freshly re-furbished wheels were bolted on with new Elise type wheel bolts (better security). The time had come to finally get the Elan off the stands and back on its own 4 feet I mean wheels. A quick test drive on the Sunday night told me it was time to book "Little Yella" in for its MOT. A phone call to Lipscomb and the test was set for Wednesday



14<sup>th</sup> May. That gave me 2 nights to re-fit the interior trim and give the car a quick bath. The drive to Lipscombs for the MOT proved rather eventful, the brakes failed on the way down Bluebell Hill. A fault with the brake Master cylinder meant that the MOT had to be cancelled, a new unit from Lotus would have cost £287 and taken 2 months on back order to get, I managed to get one delivered to the workshop the next day for £63. A call from Lipscomb on Friday told me the master cylinder was on, the brake pedal was good but there was an imbalance in the front brakes and poor efficiency at the rear, again the MOT was off. The chances of getting "Little Yella" to Leeds Castle were fast slipping away. I got the car home, stripped off the front offside caliper and found it to be sitting out of line. The caliper was re-fitted without the shims and a test drive found the brakes were working perfectly. Saturday morning saw me up bright and early trying to get a last minute MOT. Well I found a Test station that could fit me in at 11.35, so quite literally it was the 11<sup>th</sup> hour. The upshot is "Little Yella" pasted with flying colours and Cinderella made it to the Ball.



**The Endish**